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THE CHORAL SEA—BY ARTHUR B. DAVIES  
MODERN PAINTINGS LENT BY MARTIN A. RYERSON

## GRAND OPERA AND THE MODERN DESIGNERS

LAST month for a few weeks the Art Institute placed on view forty-nine of Norman-Bel Geddes' drawings for the settings and costumes of "La Nave" and the Boudour ballet, both of which a short time before had had their première in Chicago. At that time too, in the final week of the season, Messager's "Madame Chrysanthème," for which Hermann Rosse had designed the settings and costumes, was produced for the first time.

Of all art forms the metier of grand opera would appear to be the most complex. This is true not only because of the actual number of entities involved in its production, but because of the nature of the entities themselves. There is, for example, the fact that the opera is "the thing," regardless of our reactions to it; there is the rarity of critics who can maintain a balanced interest in the various auditory and visual elements of expression; the absence of an essentially

artistic tradition with regard to the histrionic phases of the art; and the peculiar temperamental quality so often found among the all but deified principals. These conditions make it possible for one demand to be pretty well satisfied while another goes wanting, and they make for the widest variety of critical estimates of a work which may lack the first artistic essential of unity.

Very fine indeed, then, is the swing toward a new phase which is taking place of late in the Chicago opera. The trend toward the modern stagecraft with the employment of men like Rosse, Anisfeld, Jones, and Geddes has already justified itself. For whatever its faults in the individual case, the modern stagecraft is an effort to get back to first principles; it is a reassertion of design. The movement may now and then kick up its heels or wave its long ears in the mere joy of existence, but these actions are more acceptable as gestures than as a



JEWEL-BEARING TREE OF AMITY—BY ARTHUR B. DAVIES  
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fixed attitude—and in the old stage-craft they were too prone to be the latter.

We have been treated this winter to a series of operas in which there really was an attempt at orchestration as to color and mood, and in these, once the strangeness of new forms had worn away, we have had moments of a high type of esthetic experience.

### FUTURE EXHIBITIONS

BY the time this Bulletin reaches members of the Art Institute, the Twenty-fourth Annual Exhibition of Works by Artists of Chicago and Vicinity will have been opened to the public. The indications are that the present collection of works shown will be the largest and most representative ever offered by Chicago artists. The prizes and other awards will be announced next month.

The etchings by Rembrandt lent by the Misses Buckingham will remain in the Print Room until February 18, after

which etchings and sanguine drawings by Arthur W. Heintzelman and etchings of flowers by Katharine Cameron will be installed, to be shown until March 7. It is planned directly thereafter to hold a memorial exhibition of etchings, woodcuts, and other prints by the late Helen Hyde.

March 9 inaugurates a group of one annual and four special exhibitions: a "one price" picture exhibition, in which will be shown only paintings selling for one hundred dollars; paintings by Adam Emory Albright; paintings by John C. Johansen; works by the Society of American Painters, Sculptors, and Engravers; and the tenth annual exhibition of etchings held by the Chicago Society of Etchers.

Both John C. Johansen and his wife, M. Jean McLane, were students of the Art Institute School. Later Mr. Johansen studied with Frank Duveneck and at Julian's in Paris, spending a period of several years in study and painting abroad. He was born in Denmark, but